

Standard 5-5: The student will demonstrate an understanding of the social, economic, and political events that influenced the United States during the Cold War era.

5.5.2 Summarize changes in the United States economy following World War II, including the expanding job market and service industry, consumerism, and new technology. (E, P, H)

Taxonomy Level: B 2 Understand/Conceptual Knowledge

Previous/future knowledge:

All concepts associated with the economy of the United States following World War II are new for 5th grade students.

In 7th grade, students will summarize the political and economic transformation of Western and Eastern Europe after World War II, including the European Economic Community (EEC) (7-6.1).

In 8th grade, students will summarize the significant aspects of the economic growth experienced by South Carolina during and following World War II (8-7.1). They will also explain how the increased industrialization and mechanization, the reduction in cotton production, and the emigration of African Americans resulted from and contributed to agricultural decline in South Carolina (8-7.3) and explain the factors that influenced the economic opportunities of African American South Carolinians during the latter twentieth century, including racial discrimination (8-7.4). Students will also explain the economic impact of twentieth century events on South Carolina, including the opening and closing of military bases, the development of industries, the influx of new citizens, and the expansion of port facilities (8-7.5).

In United States history, students will explain the causes and effects of social and cultural changes in postwar America, including educational programs, expanding suburbanization, the emergence of the consumer culture, the secularization of society and the reemergence of religious conservatism, and the roles of women in American society (USHC-9.1).

It is essential for students to know:

Students must summarize the economic effects of World War II on the United States. Due to the increase in jobs and production necessary to sustain the war effort, the economy of the United States experienced a boost, lifting the nation out of the Great Depression. The United States experienced an economic boom following the conclusion of World War II. Americans had devoted much of their financial priorities to the war effort. Industries that had focused their efforts on war materials shifted to the production of consumer products. As a result of the increase in wartime jobs, Americans had savings with which to purchase new products, such as automobiles, televisions, and radios, which had not been available during the war. Advertising encouraged people to buy and an increasing **consumerism** dominated American culture. As consumers had more money to spend, **service industries** such as dry cleaners and restaurants expanded. The automobile and new highway system gave rise to motels and fast food restaurants. More consumer credit was available in the form of credit cards.

New **technologies** created new products, improved existing ones and enticed consumers to buy these new and improved products. Changes to the automobile such as automatic transmissions, radial tires and power steering made them safer and easier to drive. Jet engines and pressurized cabins changed the airline industry by providing faster, more efficient air travel. Improved telephone service [long distance] and the new televisions changed communication, strengthening national and international connections. Technologies such as air conditioning became more widely available, making the South a more attractive

place to live and establish industries. Air conditioning also moved the family off of the front porch and inside in front of the television.

It is not essential for students to know: This indicator does not require students to specifically identify new products and services produced following World War II. However, since students are required to summarize the changes that arise following World War II, it would be helpful if students could describe in general the types of products and services that came about following the war. Students do not need to understand why the credit card became available to help consumers to meet the demands of inflation nor do they have to understand how credit works. Students do not need to know how the workplace changes affected the growth of labor unions in the postwar period.

Assessment guidelines:

Appropriate assessments require students to **summarize** economic changes experienced in the United States following World War II. Students should be able to **explain** the factors that contributed to the expanding job market, service industry and consumerism. Students should be able to **identify examples** of new technologies that developed in this time period. Appropriate assessments should also require students to **infer** the effects of these changes; **compare** prewar and postwar economic conditions; and **identify causes** of these factors.

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